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PALESTINE

23 Dec 78

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MIDDLE-ARAB AFFAIRS

The meeting was attended by the chairman and members of the Political Committee of the Palestinian revolution and by a large number of cadres from the Palestinian revolutionary factions in Iraq.

The meeting lasted more than 5 hours and dealt with current problems and the plots aimed at liquidating the Palestinian revolution and perpetuating the Zionist presence on Palestinian soil. The meeting also discussed internal Palestinian issues.

KUWAITI PAPER SAYS ABU NIDAL GIVES UP LEADERSHIP OF FACTION

Black June 1978

LD231228Y Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0700 GMT 23 Dec 78 LD

[Text] Kuwait--A local paper today reports that the dissident Palestinian leader Gabri al-Banna, Abu Nidal, has given up his leadership of the Fida'i organization which he had previously withdrawn from the Palestine Liberation Organization, Fatah. AS-SIYASAH, quoting Palestinian sources, goes on to say that one of the leaders of the leftwing of Fatah Naji 'Allush took over the leadership of Abu Nidal's faction, which has Baghdad as its headquarters.

Fatah previously had accused Abu Nidal of assassinating some of its prominent cadres. The paper gives two possible explanations for the absence of Abu Nidal. One explanation is based on health reasons and says that last summer he had a blood clot which forced him to be hospitalized for a while. However, according to the paper, the more accurate explanation is that the disappearance of Abu Nidal is the result of the Arab summit conference held in Baghdad last month. It says that Iraq, which sent out invitations to the summit, was annoyed by statements made by Abu Nidal criticizing the invitations on the basis that it was "com-batantly unjustified." The paper goes on to say that a reconciliation occurred between Iraq and Fatah following the summit. This contributed to the elimination of Abu Nidal, in particular, because the Fatah leaders held the existence of Abu Nidal against Iraq.

AS-SIYASAH writes that 'Allush, president of the Palestinian writers and journalists union, took over the leadership of Abu Nidal's faction after his arrival in Baghdad from Beirut on a date not specified by the paper. The paper says that what occurred was that 'Allush, Abu Ibrahim, left [words indistinct] across Syrian territory through one way or another until he reached Baghdad and went directly to Abu Nidal's office and took over command of the faction.

KUWAITI PAPER SAYS IRAQ, SYRIA EXPEL POLITICAL REFUGEES

NC260920Y Doha QNA in Arabic 0845 GMT 26 Dec 78 NC

[Text] Kuwait, 26 December--The Kuwaiti newspaper AL-WATAN says today that Iraq has asked a number of Syrian political refugees, including former Syrian President Amin al-Hafiz, to leave Iraq in the wake of the reconciliation which took place between Iraq and Syria less than 2 months ago.

Quoting informed diplomatic sources in Baghdad, the paper says that the Iraqi measure was taken at the request of the Syrian authorities, who in turn have responded to a similar request from the Iraqi authorities and ordered the deportation of 25 Iraqi political figures from Syria.

The paper adds that Al-Hafiz has left Baghdad for an East European state, which it did not identify.